

3-7-2018

Montana Kaimin, March 7, 2018

Students of the University of Montana, Missoula

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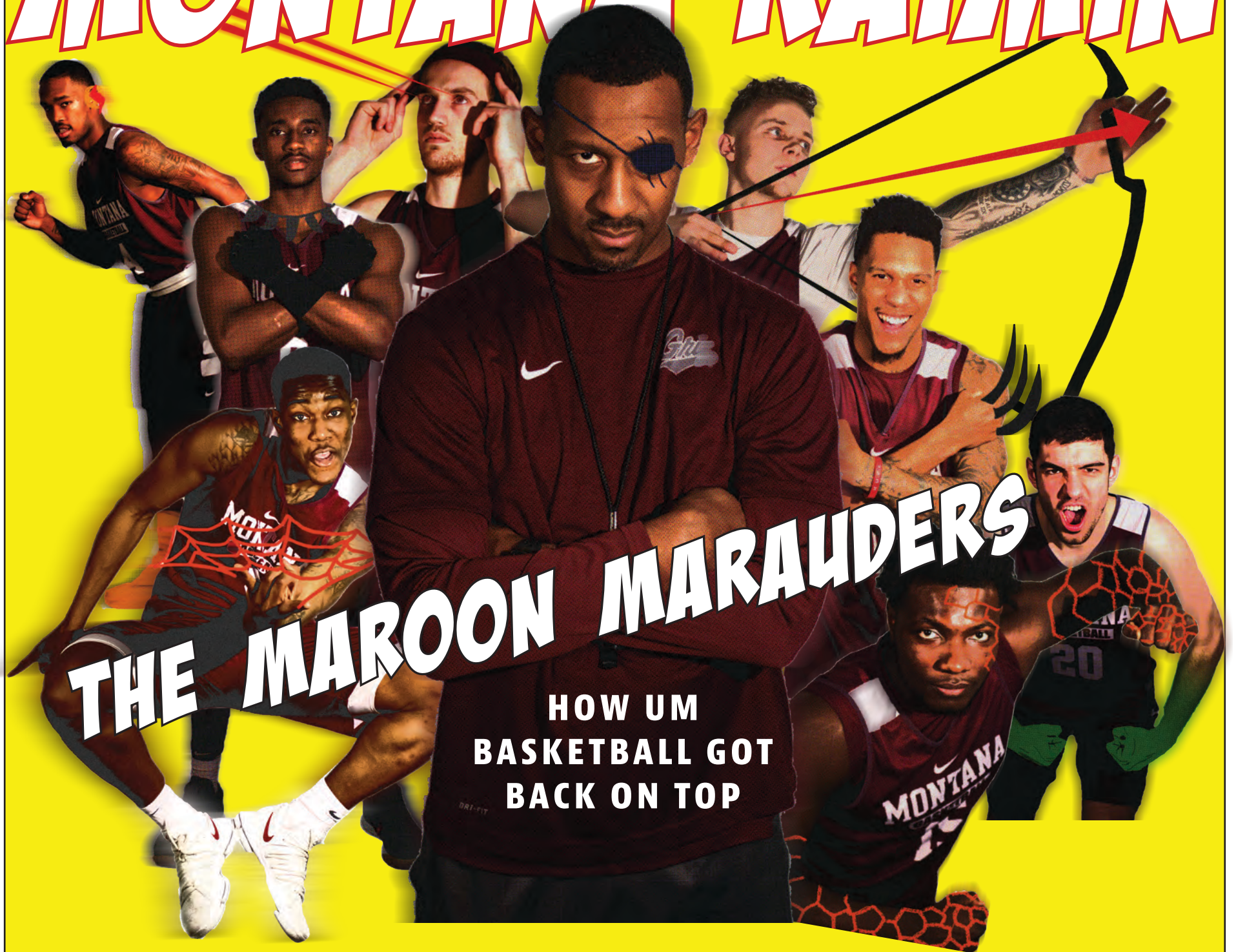
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MONTANA KAIMIN



THE MAROON MARAUDERS

HOW UM
BASKETBALL GOT
BACK ON TOP

NEWS M.I.P. case goes to
Supreme Court

ARTS Ex-homeless student
wins writing award

OPINION Baby steps to
gun reform



Issue No. 19 March 7, 2018

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14				15		16		
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24					25					26			
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42			43				44			45			
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56	57				58				59				
60					61			62		63			
64					65					66			
67						68				69			

ACROSS Copyright 2018 by The Puzzle Syndicate

- 1 Little terror
5 Wet bar?
9 Knife wound
13 ____ of thumb
14 Church V.I.P.
16 Bounce back
17 Soon, to a bard
18 Throw for a loop
19 Garbage hauler
20 Complex unit
22 Deadly mushroom
24 Schongauer work
26 Toni Morrison's "____ Baby"
27 Tabloid twosome
28 Noble position
32 Retro phone feature
35 Established
37 Indigenous
38 Not quite right
39 Full of bounce
41 Fishing gear
42 Like cows and sows
44 Campaign pro
45 Shrek, for one
46 Bomb
48 Certain tide
50 Computer capacity
51 Emphatic
56 New Year's Eve staple
59 X, in math
60 Tim Conway film, "The Billion Dollar ____"
61 Factory
63 Quitter's word
64 Word sung on 12/31
- 65 Concise
66 Flu symptom
67 Arborist's concern
68 Numerical suffix
69 Give the eye
- DOWN
1 Hold steady
2 Talk at length
3 Follow follower
4 Plant stem extension
5 Mermaid's milieu
6 Veteran
7 Annex
8 Animal fur
9 Type of psychology
10 Word in a 1978 John Irving book title
11 "Get lost!"
12 Kennel cry
15 Primary color
21 Cereal grass
23 Dogcatcher's catch
- 25 Evening bell
29 "Brokeback Mountain" director
30 CBer's term
31 Dole (out)
32 Tip, as a hat
33 Brainchild
34 Deserving of respect
36 Word of advice
39 Dry spell
40 Mumbo-jumbo
43 Pie preference
45 Type of illusion
47 Young raptor
49 It may be framed
52 Capture
53 Likeness
54 Locale
55 Aromatic compound
56 Chew the fat
57 Rush follower
58 Envelope abbr.
62 Half a score

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

C	A	L	F		W	I	S	P		C	L	A	C	K
O	D	O	R		E	C	H	O		H	E	M	A	N
N	O	G	O		B	E	E	P		A	G	A	V	E
I	R	O	N	I	C		D	U	N	G	A	R	E	E
C	E	N	T	R	A	L		P	A	R	T	Y		
					M	I	M	I	C		V	I	O	L
					M	O	S	E	S		K	O	R	A
					E	V	E	N		L	E	V	E	L
					S	E	A		P	A	N	E	L	
					A	N	C	H	O	R		T	I	E
					H	E	D	G	E		C	A	S	S
					C	H	A	R	C	O	A	L		S
					H	E	N	N	A		S	A	R	I
					A	E	G	I	S		E	V	I	L
					P	L	E	A	T		L	A	D	Y

HELP WANTED

City of Missoula Vacancies: Full-time employment. Summer employment. Various closing dates. Apply online only at www.ci.missoula.mt.us/jobs. The City of Missoula is an EEO/AA, V/H, M/F employer.

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Visitor Center Student Assistants The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, a hunter based non-profit wildlife habitat conservation organization seeks outgoing college students for part time work, 15-25 hours per week, including mandatory weekends. \$9.00 per hour. Excellent customer service, communication and computer skills required. Retail experience and a passion for conservation preferred. Positions begin immediately. Email cover letter and resume to jobs@rmef.org

SERVICES

I Buy Imports < Subaru < Toyota-Japanese/German Cars & Trucks. Nice, ugly, running or not 327-0300

Looking for additional funding for your studies? Have a strong interest in Critical Thinking and/or Separation of Church and State? We have some scholarships for you! The Missoula Area Secular Society will be offering two scholarships of \$800 each for the 2018-2019 school year for incoming freshman and undergraduates. Submit your 500-750 word essay on your topic of choice (one of those two) on our website - <https://www.secularmissoula.org/scholarship/>. Essays are due by the end of April and decisions will be made by the end of May.

The Montana Kaimin is a weekly independent student newspaper at the University of Montana.

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SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:
Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:

3	8	6	1	2	4	7	5	9
4	9	2	7	5	6	8	3	1
7	5	1	3	9	8	2	4	6
1	7	3	2	6	9	5	8	4
9	6	5	4	8	7	1	2	3
8	2	4	5	3	1	9	6	7
2	1	7	6	4	5	3	9	8
5	4	9	8	1	3	6	7	2
6	3	8	9	7	2	4	1	5

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KAIMIN COLUMN

Guns? I'm for against them

I spent last Wednesday reading stories by the fathers whose kids were killed at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting. The following afternoon I was running near campus and watched a hooded young man lift his arm to take a sip of coffee. Mistaking the cup for a gun, I turned and sprinted the other direction. It seems my fight or flight instincts have not yet adapted to a world where mass shootings occur 346 times a year, according to Gun Violence Archive, a website dedicated to cataloging mass shootings.

I'm not writing this to piss off my gun-loving peers by shitting on the Second Amendment, nor am I asking the University to install metal detectors in every classroom. I am speaking up because for the first time in my life, I'm scared to go to school because I think I might get shot.

It's not irrational of me to think the grumpy kid from Econ 101 might whip out an AR-15 and aim it at my face, is it? I could probably focus on the lesson if I wasn't thinking about how his oversized gym bag looks like the perfect hiding place for a weapon. And I know, I know — it's the guy behind the gun that's at fault. But that guy might be having a really bad day.

So yeah, people with guns make me nervous. My parents don't own guns, and their parents didn't either. I've always considered myself inherently anti-gun.

Then I moved to Montana. And I started dating a boy who thought that if everyone in a classroom was legally armed when a shooter walked in, the problem would be taken care of even before police arrived. Logically, OK, that makes sense. But why can't we just get rid of the guns in the first place so no one has to kill anyone?

Because it's not that easy. Our country is way too polarized to make a move like that. Think of it like marijuana. We haven't gone from no weed at all to allowing people to legally celebrate 4/20 just like that. It has been a process: We've gone from no blazing to decriminalized blazing to medical blazing to recreational blazing.

And as much as I'd like to pull an Australia and get rid of some guns altogether, I know that won't happen here. We have to come together and compromise. We need to take baby steps to tighten gun regulations. But what does that actually mean? I wasn't sure either, so I asked my all-knowing significant other.

Most states allow you to use 30-round magazines in semiautomatic rifles, such as the AR-15. This means that you can pull the

trigger 30 times before reloading. Let's reduce that to 10-round magazines nationwide. Yes, that still shoots 10 people, but that's better than 30 people. Baby steps.

Next, we stop selling accessories that enable semiautomatic weapons to act as fully automatic. This is how Stephen Paddock killed nearly 60 people in Las Vegas.

Finally, you should have to be at least 21 to purchase a gun. If you can't handle a buzz, you can't handle a weapon.

I realize that for some gun-loving folks, the Second Amendment is an identity more than it is a right. By no means do I want to strip you of who you are. But my identity is equated with my education, and the use of guns is threatening that. So, let's start with a compromise to move things forward, because I don't want to be scared to come to class.

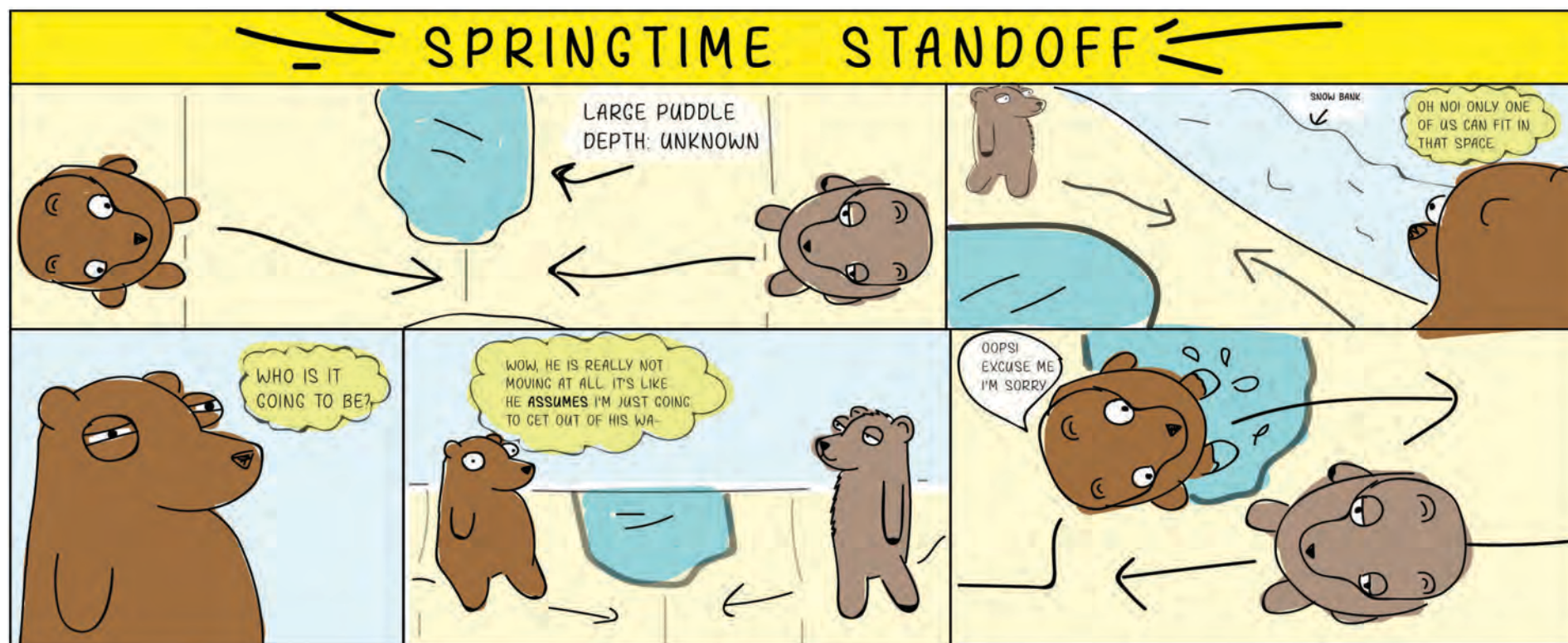
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KAIMIN COMIC



RENE SANCHEZ

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Queeries: I don't care that you tolerate me

I tolerate gay people, but do I have to be OK with them shoving their sexuality in my face?

What, you mean like how hetero love is shoved in our faces 24/7? Do me a favor: Put a mark on a Post-it every time you see a movie, TV show, book, commercial or other form of media featuring a straight couple. Make sure to include "his and hers" merchandise. Do the same for gay couples in a different color. Ask yourself, "Who is really shoving what in whose face?"

Additionally, what does it mean that you're tolerant? What are you tolerant of? Where is this mysterious line you're drawing? More important, do you apply the same line to straight couples?

If you're comfortable seeing straight couples making out in public but uncomfortable when gay couples do the same thing, you're probably not as "tolerant" as you think.

The good thing is, it's possible to unlearn that discomfort. That might not sound super fun, but if you're going to wave the tolerance card around, it's only fair that you think about this a little bit.

Most of us never had to learn to be comfortable with straightness. The reason for this is that we get pro-hetero messages daily from our media and society. You can buy onesies for babies that say things like,

"Ladies' Man" or "Little Heartbreaker," and that's not seen as weird at all, despite the fact that you're imposing sexuality on your infant. The mere fact that people have to come out as something other than straight shows how prevalent heterosexuality is. It's unquestioned until someone realizes it doesn't apply to them.

You might argue that since there are more straight people than non-straight people, this is a totally acceptable practice. I call bullshit. The fact is that compulsory heterosexuality — the idea that everyone is straight until they tell you otherwise — can have a lot of adverse effects on gay and bisexual people. Many people don't come out until late in life because they never grew up with gay representation and didn't realize that was a real option for them. Many gay people never feel comfortable coming out because they're surrounded by images of heterosexuality that make their loved ones uncomfortable or unfamiliar with gayness. This discomfort can vary from mild to outright violent, and if a gay person isn't sure how their family and friends will react to their coming out, they may find it easier to do nothing at all.

I'm saying this because the idea of "tolerance" doesn't do a thing to help gay people stay safe. In fact, I think it's a way to mask outright homophobia. If you can keep hiding behind the fact that you're tol-

erant, you never have to actually confront the things that make you uncomfortable and work to unlearn them.

Think about the words you're using. I'm tolerant of tons of things I don't like. I tolerate it when my cats all wake me up at 5 a.m. in the morning because I love them, but I still wish they'd stop. I'm tolerant of mosquitoes, but I still wear bug spray in the summer. I tolerate the dentist, but I'm not stoked to see him by any means. Is that really the message you want to send the world about how you feel about gay people? We're not mosquitoes, you know.

Got a queery? Send any questions you have to calreynolds.queeries@gmail.com. Ask me what you've been afraid to ask or what you've always wanted to know. Your name and any other personal information will not be published.

CAL REYNOLDS

calreynolds.queeries@gmail.com

@CalReynoldsMT



UM might suck sometimes, but Bozeman sucks harder

Sometimes it feels like our University is constantly drawing the short straw — or just massively screwing up. I'm looking at you, eliminated departmental commencement ceremonies. While it's often frustrating to go to school here, I would like to bring to light one of the oft-forgotten benefits of living and going to school here in Missoula: the fact that we don't have to live in Bozeman.

I not only spent a full 18 years living in Bozeman, but also a semester there last fall working and doing my best to mentally escape the nightmare of the young Bozeman social scene. A quick disclaimer so my friends there don't hate me: This is not about you. I love you.

This is about everybody else.

Bozeman is terrible on two fronts. Objectively, it's a very scenic place, the kind that makes people like Justin Timberlake and John Mayer move up from LA and get all cowboy and rustic. It also offers access to Yellowstone, Big Sky and miles of trails and big ol' mountains. Why are they so big? Because they're full of secrets.

The consequences of unbound access to the now-hip mountainous West are primarily that the most annoying people in the whole country seem to congregate around Bozeman (including, strangely, a one-time Kardashian appearance). This has led to the

loss of the old kitsch that used to permeate Main Street and to the addition of stores where you can buy a \$500 hat while drinking a mimosa and getting your hair done. Bozeman is experiencing incredible growth, and with the influx of money and people come inevitable growing pains. A lot of long-time residents are experiencing difficulties in a town where they feel like they have lost their voices in the face of development.

Currently on Main, there's a brunch place called Jam! Yes, it includes the exclamation mark, despicably. I went once with friends and our waiter was wearing glasses without lenses, which I definitely noticed. What kind of regressive, fundamentally flawed society allows for that kind of bullshit?

Bring back Real Bozeman!

But actually, "Real Bozeman" is one of my other problems. The massive cluster of ski bros getting turnt on Montucky Cold Snacks while editing their season ski edits is honest-to-God the most inane, depressing community I've ever attempted to integrate into. Maybe it's because I don't really give a shit about skiing or snow sports, but going to parties where the conversation topics exclusively straddled Red Bull and snowmobiling turned me off Pabst Blue Ribbon forever and onto nihilism.

I found the social scene to be suffocating, hierarchical based on how well you could do a backflip and, ultimately, aggressively mindless. It's reflective of a town that has two faces: the snobby rich face of new development and the inebriated face of a 19-year-old ski bum with nothing to talk about but "gettin' sendy."

Of course, there are some cool people in Bozeman. My elementary school teachers taught me a lot. I love the old cohort of residents, and a lot of the Montana State University students I used to hang out with are funny, smart, engaging, active in their community and were very good to me when I was in a weird spot of indecision about my life. Everybody else sucks (except my mom and dad), and I'm glad I can take refuge in the much cooler, better and uglier, (but more fun) city of Missoula.

Remember, fellow UM students: It could be worse.

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STUDENT HEALTH

Food truck comes to final stop after years of late-night snacks

CASSIDY ALEXANDER

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Nate Hampson started managing the Galloping Griz food truck while he was finishing his culinary degree at UM. After graduating, he had the chance to make the food truck into the mobile restaurant of his dreams.

With the freedom to operate the truck as he saw fit, Hampson turned a money-sucking business into a profitable one, he said. By moving the Galloping Griz to a more permanent location on UM's main campus and crafting the truck's signature menu of "bombs" and other greasy late-night snacks, Hampson said the operation finally reached its potential.

Now, nearly four years later, students must say goodbye to the Galloping Griz after a recent decision by UM Dining to suspend its business.

The food truck's profits rose steadily when Hampson took over in 2014 to 2016, peaking at a profit of \$34,000. But from July 1, 2017, to Dec. 31, 2017, the truck saw a record loss of \$33,000 in just six months.

Hampson, who left the Galloping Griz last September, said he blames the closing of the food truck on UM Dining's top-down pressure to change the menu.

"I was able to turn the truck around and make it profitable for UM Dining," Hampson said. "That was all disregarded and thrown out the window when the new director came in."

Camp Howard became UM Dining's director in March 2017. That spring, UM Dining created a focus group of students to get feedback on its various food venues.

Howard said the students wanted the food truck to resemble trucks in Missoula that serve ethnic dishes. Additionally, they wanted more variety in the menu so they wouldn't get bored with the options, he said.

Starting in fall 2017, the truck began serving niche menus with options including Korean food, Southern food and Greek food. Howard said UM Dining thought it was giving students what they wanted.

"Maybe the student group we looked into didn't represent the whole student body," Howard said. "The first week it was really successful, but after that, the sales just really died off."

Hampson said he doesn't think students wanted the changes UM Dining said they asked for. The director took the students' requests for more options and decided the menu's con-



The Galloping Griz food truck, which has offered a variety of ethnic street food like tacos and quesadillas to UM campus-goers, now sits out of service in a UM storage lot March 4. PHOTO TATE SAMATA

cept was "tired," Hampson said.

"To make the people want the new menu the way they wanted the old menu, we couldn't do that," Hampson said. "They went from having a profitable and sound operation to no longer having an operation."

The food truck was a clear success that should have expanded rather than changed, Hampson said. When Casa Niña, which used to have a space in the University Center Food Court, was replaced with Taco Sano, UM Dining missed out on a huge opportunity to put the food truck's menu in that space, he said.

UM Dining is struggling to figure out which concepts work well for the spaces they have. Instead of capitalizing on what's successful, UM Dining is taking poorly calculated risks that continue to lose money, Hampson said.

"They try to be cutting edge and trendy," Hampson said. "But they don't operate UM Dining like a business."

The food truck is not UM Dining's only money-losing venue. The Iron Griz, UM Dining's upscale restaurant, is predicted to exceed \$1 million next year in net losses since it reopened in 2015. Choosing to close down the food truck is a much easier task than it would be to close the Iron Griz, Howard said.

"What we have invested financially at the Iron Griz is different from what we've invested in the food truck," Howard said. "It's hard to compare the two because we are obligated through a contract to provide food services at the golf course."

The food truck will be available for tailgates and special events, but not on an everyday basis, Howard said.

A VERY SPECIAL LTE

Navid needs your help!

Dear People of the Great State of Montana,

Hello! I am a third-grade student in Northern Virginia. In third grade, we do state reports, and I have chosen your state! I am very excited to learn more about the great state of Montana as I work on my report.

Information that I gather for my report will mainly be from books and websites, but I would also like to get information from the people who live in the state. This is why I am writing to you. I was hoping that you would be willing to send me some items to help me learn more about the best things in your state. It could be things like postcards, maps, pictures, souvenirs, general information, this newspaper article, or any other items that would be useful. You can mail items to the address below. I really appreciate your help!

Sincerely,

Navid

Ed. note: Navid included the following address, where you can send Montana memorabilia if you are so inclined:

Mrs. Bozorgzad's Class

The Langley School

1411 Balls Hill Road

McLean, Virginia, 22101

Alternatively, you can drop items off at the Kaimin's office in Don Anderson Hall, room 208, by March 14. We'll make sure everything gets to Navid.

George Scialabba

Public Intellectual and Social Critic

"Slouching Towards Utopia"

(Ezio Cappadocia Memorial Lecture on Politics and History)

Hailed as "one of a handful of public intellectuals who are keeping the critical spirit alive in a time of stupefying and complacency," award-winning critic George Scialabba will comment on the features of the present moral consensus in plutocratic America that might require alteration if we want to have a rational and human future.



Monday, March 12, 2018
8 p.m. Dennison Theatre

UNIVERSITY OF
MONTANA

Former student appeals Griz game MIP to state supreme court

MATT NEUMAN

matthew.neuman@umontana.edu/@Matt_Neuman_

Plenty of University of Montana students have been stuck with minor in possession of alcohol charges after having a little too much fun at a Griz game, but Marcy Kroschel may be the first one to appeal hers all the way up to the Montana Supreme Court.

Now the court must rule on how far police can go to investigate an MIP without illegally infringing on a person's rights.

Kroschel's attorney argued that UM Police illegally detained and interrogated Kroschel, forcing her to divulge incriminating information used to prosecute her. The assistant attorney general representing the city of Missoula disputed this, saying officers were attempting to obtain basic biographical information, which wouldn't constitute a criminal investigation.

According to court documents, UMPD Officer Shannon Parsons spotted Kroschel, 20, who appeared young and seemed to be having trouble walking, at an Aug. 29, 2015, Griz game. After approaching Kroschel, Parsons said she could smell alcohol and began investigating.

Parsons asked for Kroschel's ID, but she said it was at her seat. When asked, Kroschel provided her name and a false birth date, making her appear 22. But when asked for her name's spelling, Kroschel misspelled it, keeping officers from finding her in student or criminal databases, according to court documents.

Parsons suspected Kroschel was lying about her name and allegedly threatened her with jail time for lying to police. When Kroschel asked to leave, Parsons proceeded to take Kroschel by the arm to a secluded room where another officer joined in demanding Kroschel's name. Officers requested the student's cell phone number to call and listen to how she identified herself on her voicemail, which she provided, the documents said.

Kroschel eventually gave in and properly spelled her last name for officers, who then discovered her real age, and issued MIP and obstruction citations. Kroschel was never arrested or read her Miranda rights — the right to remain silent.

Anne Hamilton, Kroschel's attorney through the Associated Students of the University of Montana's Legal Services program, argued that demanding Kroschel's ID and age both went beyond what Montana's investigative stop law allows.

Montana's investigative stop law only allows police to

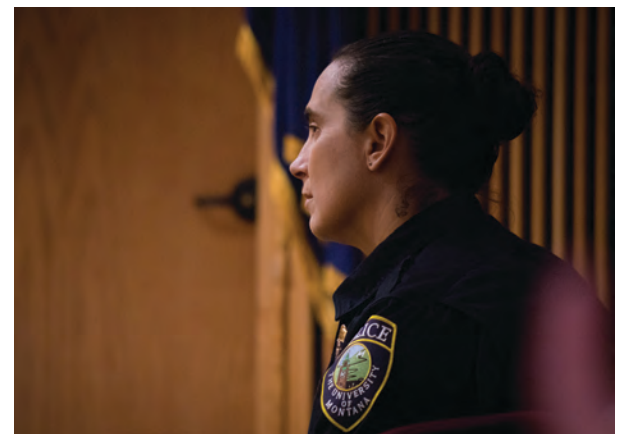


Montana Supreme Court Justice Dirk Sandefur questions ASUM Legal attorney Anne Hamilton during an appeal of UM student Marcy Kroschel's MIP charge at the state supreme court in Helena on Feb. 28. Kroschel was stopped and questioned during a football game at Washington-Grizzly Stadium in 2015 and has appealed the legality of the stop to the state supreme court. PHOTO MATT NEUMAN

ask a person on foot three questions: his or her name, address and explanation of actions. Hamilton argued that when Parsons asked for the student's ID, the law was violated. Additionally, police repeatedly demanded Kroschel's name in order to verify her age. Asking this type of incriminating question while detained in a room without being read her Miranda rights could amount to a Fifth Amendment violation.

Citing a 2013 state supreme court case, *State v. Driscoll*, Hamilton argued the court set a precedent in that case, which found police in Dillon had overstepped their legal boundaries by investigating a young-looking man in a bar who claimed to be 22. The court found police should have stopped investigating once the man said he was 22, but instead took him outside and interrogated him.

The court has yet to issue an opinion.



UMPD Officer Shannon Parsons, who allegedly detained and interrogated a UM student improperly, looks on during the oral arguments at the Montana Supreme Court in Helena on Feb. 28. PHOTO MATT NEUMAN

UPC TAKES OVER

Bodnar renews plan to fix UM's budget and identity crisis

MATT NEUMAN

matthew.neuman@umontana.edu/@Matt_Neuman_

The University of Montana has begun another effort to right its ailing budget, with the goal of identifying which academic programs UM will continue to fund and which ones will be targeted for cuts.

If that mission sounds familiar, it's because it is a task UM has been attempting for a while now.

This endeavor is led by the University Planning Committee, a committee that existed at UM before being temporarily put on hold last year.

Over the next two months, the reconceived University Planning Committee, chaired by President Seth Bodnar, is slated to rewrite UM's mission statement, identify "4 to 6 areas of excellence," decide which academic departments don't fit the new identity, and recommend cuts to those programs. Bodnar said the UPC's goal is to have a clear plan to present to the Board of Regents in May outlining a path to closing budget gaps over the next four years.

This sounds similar to the goals of the Academic Programs and Administrative Services Prioritization task force, last year's fraught attempt at ranking programs. But Bodnar and others on the UPC insist it will not function as "APASP 2.0," but rather use APASP's work as a starting point.

A key difference between the UPC and APASP is that the UPC will be looking at the money — how much money needs to be cut from the budget and how much programs cost — while APASP operated strictly based on data and written testimony from programs.

It's still unclear how heavily APASP's work will influence the UPC. In some of the committee members' final remarks last semester, after ranking all academic programs, members of APASP showed skepticism of the task force's process, acknowledging fundamental flaws in the data and methods used.

The two undergraduate student representatives on the UPC, ASUM President Braden Fitzgerald and Sen. Alexandria Schaffer, raised concerns during the first UPC meeting Feb. 16 about how the UPC's work will affect fall 2018 course offerings.

Fitzgerald said the immediate impact the UPC will have on the fall semester is still unclear, but said he will fight for transparency and opportunities for input from students throughout the process, rather than just feedback at the end.

"Students have to be able to graduate on time, so that is a priority, but we also can't afford to get to the end of this process and not act," Fitzgerald said. "We need campus to buy into the process, be involved and aware, and produce actionable items from this."



UM President Seth Bodnar at an introductory press conference in the Payne Family Native American Center on Oct. 17, 2017. PHOTO REED KLASS

The UPC has formed two subcommittees, with one focused on rewriting the University's mission statement and the other focused on analyzing APASP and institutional data to inform decisions on where to cut. The second subcommittee is co-chaired by Megan Stark, faculty union vice president, and Paul Kirgis, dean of the law school. Both questioned the usefulness of much of APASP's work during a Feb. 27 meeting.

The other subcommittee, tasked with rewriting a more concise and compelling mission statement, is set to wrap up the majority of its work within the next week, in order to provide a guide for the data subcommittee. The group, co-chaired by Fitzgerald and Dean of Heath and Medicine Reed Humphrey will use input from the Strategic Plan Coordinating Council, APASP data and outside reports to determine UM's areas of excellence.

Bodnar has asked the group to come up with four to six areas of excellence. He often uses health and medicine as examples of one area he sees as a must-have. Other potential areas of excellence discussed include ecology and sustainability, human interaction, and human expression. Programs not falling into the determined areas of excellence would be more susceptible to cuts.

Changes to academic curriculum must be reviewed by the

Faculty Senate before those plans can be presented to the Board of Regents. This adds another layer of urgency to the process, as Faculty Senate needs enough time to properly review the changes before early May.

Members of the Senate executive team raised concerns about incoming students accepting scholarships for programs that could be cut as a result of the UPC. Students enrolled in a program must be "taught out" and graduate before the program can be eliminated. However, programs can be trimmed to a bare minimum while students are still enrolled. Deadlines for incoming students to accept scholarships generally fall before the UPC is scheduled to know which programs will be phased out, leaving incoming students in limbo.

To meet the rapidly approaching deadlines, the UPC subgroups are scheduled to meet multiple times per week, and the whole committee will meet once a week.

To help keep campus up to date on the work of the UPC, the Kaimin is starting a "reporter's notebook" on our website, which will be updated after every UPC meeting, providing readers a brief and concise update on the process. The reporter's notebook will supplement more in-depth stories and analysis of UIM's ongoing struggle to cut its budget and raise enrollment.

THE MAROON MARAUDERS

STORY NICK PUCKETT

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS LACEY YOUNG & DELANIE FERGUSON

Nothing lasts forever. Not this team, or this season, or this moment of Travis DeCuire snipping the last piece of braided nylon dangling from the rim at Dahlberg Arena. A conference championship is something to savor.

Fittingly, the team to beat for the title March 1 was Weber State, Montana's fiercest basketball rival and a down-to-the-wire recruiting competitor for the Griz' newest star Timmy Falls. The finishing touch on what has been the best season during the DeCuire era was on the line, making the 75-57 win that much sweeter. There's no longer any doubt about who the best team in the Big Sky Conference is.

DeCuire waved the net around his head like a lasso and then draped it around his neck. He hugged his players and his coaches and grinned ear-to-ear. Two days later they beat Idaho State, affirming this year's team as one of the best in Montana's storied history.

The Griz will return to the conference spotlight March 8 to compete for the coveted Big Sky tournament crown, a feat that comes with a ticket to the 68-team NCAA Tournament. It's something no one on the team has experienced in their current roles. Neither was the feeling of owning the regular season Big Sky title.

These players will graduate, new ones will come in. Coaches will move on, upsets will happen, other teams will get better. A different team will be posing for photos with the Big Sky trophy, players smiling with bits of nylon stuck behind one ear. But this time, that team was the Griz.

THERE WAS

slight cause for concern when no one could get a shot to fall early. It was a sellout crowd at Dahlberg Arena Feb. 24, and this was Montana State.

Ahmaad Rorie missed his first five. Fabijan Krslovic started 2-for-6. Jamar Akoh landed in foul trouble, and Michael Oguine couldn't find a single clean shot.

Who would take over?

Then, off the bench came Timmy Falls, DeCuire's prize recruit. A slender, 6-foot-2 guard from Dublin, California, with a McGregor-esque wings tattoo across his chest and a curly blond undercut. He has a Robin-like aura and a knack for heating up when his team needs it the most.

Falls' powers were on full display for the first time to Griz fans Dec. 19, when he dropped four threes in as many shots for a 14-point night. Later they celebrated his open rebellion against the referees.

While Oguine, Rorie and Akoh battled double-teams and traps in the opening minutes of Cat-Griz, Falls was left wide open on the perimeter. He bricked his first three-pointer, but drained his second. Then he made his next one. After his third he fell back

on defense, intercepted a pass and finished a lay-up in transition with contact. Of course, he didn't miss his free throw.

"Guess the football players have a little bit more respect for the freshmen," Falls joked later that week.

Falls took on a leading role in this, his freshman season. When the Griz have needed a spark or some splash, Falls delivered with clutch jumpers and a sneaky-good drive. He's not always on. But when he is, the Griz offense is usually at its best.

The rest of the Griz followed Falls' lead in the second half. His roommate, Texas high school standout Karl Nicholas, put up 11 points in Akoh's place. Sayeed Pridgett, a sophomore who grew up an hour north of Falls in Oakland, landed 7-of-9 in the second half to complete a 21-point night. Then Rorie heated up, and so did Krslovic and Bobby Moorehead.

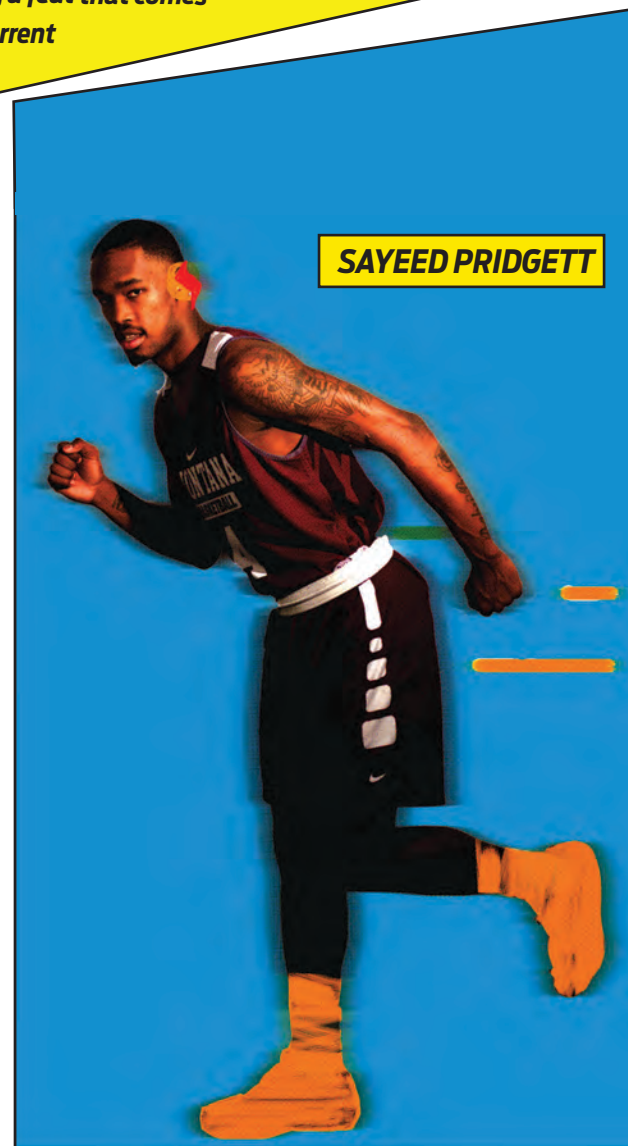
Falls didn't disappoint his fans, the 7000 amateur officials wearing maroon, who were noticeably vicious to the officials after a phantom call on Akoh. What Falls said to the ref was inaudible, but evidently it warranted a technical foul on his way to the bench midway through the second half.

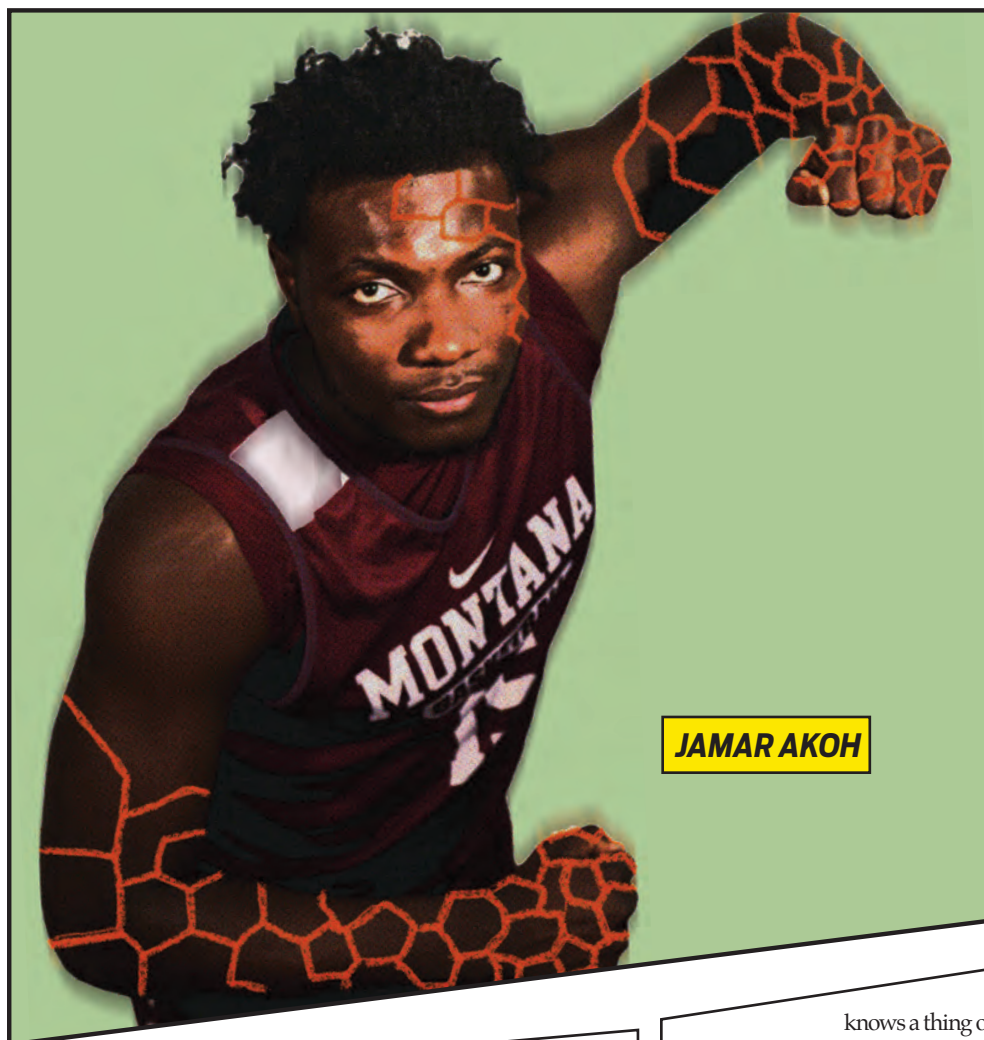
It didn't matter that Falls didn't score the entire second half of that game. Montana went on to dismantle the Bobcats 90-63.

The following game, Falls was honored with his own giant-head poster for the Griz' game against Weber State. The student section's version of Mount Rushmore has grown slowly as more players had their moments throughout the season. Falls joined an elite club. The eight heads – DeCuire's, Rorie's, Oguine's, Akoh's, Krslovic's, Pridgett's, Falls' and Moorehead's with the headband – are a discomfiting reminder to opponents of what Krslovic described as a collectively selfless mentality:

"Everybody's willing to sacrifice and put the team first, and acknowledge that maybe it's someone else's turn to take over and ride them out."

SAYEED PRIDGETT





JAMAR AKOH

GETTING THESE players to elaborate on their individual success is about as difficult as it is to complete an interview that doesn't include some variation of the phrase, "thanks to my teammates."

Last year, that wasn't the case.

"Guys weren't necessarily bought in to what we were doing all the time," the junior, Moorehead said. "We had different guys with different issues"

The team finished 16-16 last season and lost to Idaho in the first round of the conference tournament. The team scored more points per game than its current average, but sloppiness on the defensive end caused the Griz to lose several close games.

Not only is the team shooting better than it did a year ago, up from 45 to 47 percent, but the Griz are also taking better shots. The team is outscoring opponents by 9.5 points per game. And the team is turning the ball over less, about one fewer turnover per game.

Against Weber State on March 1, the team dished out 22 assists, almost double the average from last season, on its way to the outright regular season conference title.

"It's hard to have guys who are about all of the right things, and if this was a text message the A-L-L would be in caps," DeCuire said. "It's hard to be about playing defense all the time, hustling all the time, taking charges, diving on the floor and not knowing when, or if, you're going to get shots."

JAMAR AKOH came to Missoula in search of something different.

The 6-foot-8 junior from Rancho Cucamonga, California, who's famous for his backboard-rattling dunks and laid-back demeanor, wasn't winning at his old school.

Akoh transferred to Montana in 2016 from California State-Fullerton, where his team went a combined 19-42 in his freshman and sophomore seasons. It didn't take long for Akoh to become a household name in Missoula, even if much of Missoula struggles to pronounce it (not ae-koh or aw-koh, but UH-koh). He put up 34 points to carry the Griz to an 89-80 win over Northern Colorado Jan. 6.

Before practice on Feb. 20, Akoh pointed across the gym at assistant coach Jay Flores bear-hugging the freshman Karl Nicholas.

"(Other teams) say they're together, and you try to preach family and all that, but I think we really have it," Akoh said. "We're hugging each other, a coach and a player ... It's not like they're bigger than us or we're bigger than them. We're not too arrogant to hang out with each other or think like, 'I'm better than the guy who doesn't play or the walk-on.'"

That togetherness manifests itself in how the players genuinely celebrate each other's successes. It's apparent especially in small situations, like in practice Feb. 28, when Moorehead whooped as Krslovic punched home a dunk during an offense-only drill, or when players on the bench went wild after Moorehead threw down a one-handed dunk off a fast-break during the second half of Montana's route of Montana State.

"We're happy with everybody having a good game," Akoh said. "You know, doing what they do."

"I don't feel any different playing out there in it. It's just something that makes me look a little bit different," he said. "I just like wearing it."

BOBBY MOOREHEAD

knows a thing or two about the difference a year can make.

The junior from Tacoma, Washington, struggled last year after a breakout freshman campaign as the team's off-the-bench sharp-shooter. He shot at a clip of just 29 percent, 10 points lower than the previous year.

Now Moorehead's in the middle of the best season of his career, averaging highs in points, rebounds and, naturally, minutes.

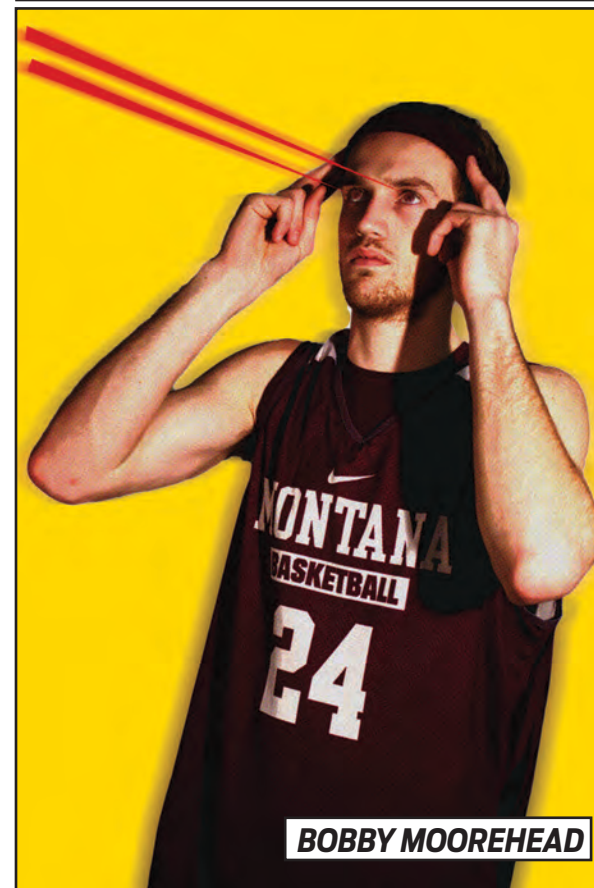
"I just think that when you get in those slumps, you have to think, 'I'm a good shooter and they're bound to go in at some point,'" he said. "So you've just got to keep shooting the ball."

These days, Moorehead is known just as well by his given moniker, "Headband Bobby," which yielded its own hashtag and offered an image rebirth for the Griz forward. His nickname is immortalized in giant-head form and creeps further into legend with each game.

Ben Wineman, a play-by-play announcer for SWX Montana, credited the forehead accessory for Moorehead's fast-break dunk against the Cats.

"We have never seen that from Bobby Moorehead in a basketball game. The headband's working tonight for number 24," Wineman said.

To Moorehead, the headband is practical. He wore one in high school, and Oguine had a spare (he doesn't use one anyway). It keeps the sweat out of his eyes, Moorehead said humbly while observing shootaround headband-less before practice Feb. 20. However, contrary to the principles of mutual causality, he confirmed it does not possess special powers.



BOBBY MOOREHEAD

IT'S TYPICAL to see the shooters stay late at practice. The day before Weber State, Mike Oguine and Timmy Falls hung back, allowing their teammates to take first dibs at the photo shoot setup by *Kaimin* photographers.

Each one looked at the little orange sticky note directing him about what pose would suit them best.

Meanwhile, Oguine was at the far hoop, the one that would be netless 28 hours later, draining three-pointers from every spot on the floor.

In games, fans recognize Oguine by the zero on his back. It feels appropriate for the man with a last name that starts with an O, and it's a convenient symbol for the way Oguine refuses to put himself before the rest of the team.

Picking yourself up off the floor isn't as sexy as hanging on the rim or flashing three fingers to a roaring crowd — Oguine does both — but Oguine prides himself on the less glamorous aspects of the game. He understands as well as anyone on the team the importance of defense and rarely credits his own — or anyone else's — scoring ability as the reason his team wins games.

"There are some people who can appreciate a team that gets stops," Oguine said. "To us, we just know that's what makes us tick. It's not really something you can define. It's just keeping our opponents from getting points that really, for us, keeps us going."

When Oguine, who was named the Big Sky's Defensive Player of the Year Monday, finally joined the photo shoot, he was the last player left in the arena. He looked surprised when his pose was for Captain America.

"Can I be Black Panther instead?" he said. The photographer informed him someone else did a similar pose, and, out of fairness, no one could do Black Panther. "Aw, let them hate," he said, and he crossed his arms in an X across his chest.

TRAVIS DECUIRE has been in this moment before, climbing a ladder in what is now Dahlberg Arena to cut down the nets. Last time he did it as a player. He's never had the opportunity to make the final cut — only the coach gets those honors.

In 1991, DeCuire still had his trademark mustache and goatee, only back then there were no hints of gray and his Griz uniform was copper and gold. That was the year DeCuire won his first Big Sky championship and made an appearance at the Big Dance. That team lost in the first round, as did DeCuire's '92 team, the last to go undefeated at home before this year's did.

He came close in 2014, his first year as head coach of his alma mater. The Griz shared the regular season title that year with Eastern Washington and lost to the Eagles on their own floor in the conference championship game.

That offseason was DeCuire's chance to assemble the team in his vision. He pulled Rorie away from Oregon and landed an athletic guard from Southern California, Oguine, and a steady shooter from Tacoma later to be known as Headband Bob.

The result of last season would have been decent for any other team. They finished 11-7 in the conference and came close to a first-round win in the tournament. But it wasn't enough. DeCuire said they were just getting started.

"Sometimes guys don't like roles," DeCuire said. "But if they know what they are, they figure out whether they want to make the most of it or not,



MICHAEL OGUINE



TIMMY FALLS



KARL NICHOLAS

AHMAAD RORIE



and they have plenty of time to do it, rather than having that conversation in December.”

It’s only right that the man who holds the school record for assists now leads one of the most selfless teams in Griz history. He said this year’s team was the first one he’s been on — as a head coach, assistant coach or a player — where everyone knew their roles before the season started.

The players point to each other’s desire to hang out together as the root of their on-court chemistry. Their initiative to build a bond between them goes as far as eating meals together in equal rotations, going to movies or chatting casually while playing Fortnite, a third-person shooter video game similar to the plot of “The Hunger Games.” DeCuire recalled the Griz teams he played on bonding similarly over Sega Genesis. (Now his games of choice include chess and dominos on his phone.)

It started with players like the senior forward Krslovic, who has played on every one of DeCuire’s teams and understands better than anyone on the court where each player should be and how DeCuire tries to run the offense. DeCuire sees a lot of himself in Krslovic, which is what sparked a conversation between the two about Krslovic’s possible future as a coach.

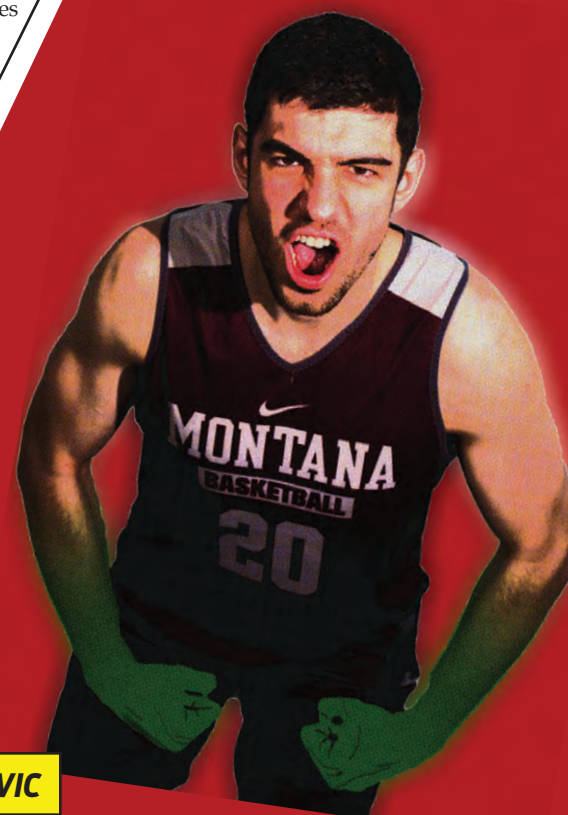
“Usually it’s always the best players on the floor that say, ‘Hey, I want to come back and coach,’” DeCuire said. “We never call those guys. They’re always on the floor. They never get to see it from the bench ... What you see and what you should see, it’s a habit.”

The man they call Fab played his 56th and final game in Dahlberg Arena on Saturday and exited with a standing ovation, having played in more games than any Griz before. He didn’t reach the 1,000-point mark like Oguine or Rorie, yet he kept himself in the starting lineup all four years as the adhesive that keeps DeCuire’s game plan intact.

“This year feels a lot like my freshman year in terms of the cohesiveness of the team and how willing we all are to sacrifice for the team,” Krslovic said.

The biggest chunks of practice are spent in walk-throughs, when DeCuire can communicate his vision. He nudges and drags players by the backs of their jerseys to perfect a game plan, removing any barriers of transparency. Before, the problem was having the players know why a play works. This year, the team’s IQ has been its biggest strength.

“I think the right conversations are taking place when the coaches aren’t around,” DeCuire said. “And I think the guys are stepping in on the fact that winning is the most important thing for this team.”



FABIJAN KRSLOVIC

Nontrad honored with creative writing award for work about his past

MICAH DREW

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The first time University of Montana student Barry Maxwell read his work out loud, he bailed.

"It was a total panic attack. Sweat was dripping down my glasses and I couldn't read anymore," Maxwell said. "I got to the end of the [first] paragraph, said thank you and ran out."

Fast forward to Friday, March 2, at a celebration for Maxwell as the recipient of the Merriam-Frontier award in creative writing. His low, steady voice — punctuated with "y'all's" that revealed his Texan roots — betrayed no sign of panic.

"[The award] is a great surprise, and it's a real sort of vindication, especially being totally unfunded," he said.

Maxwell, 57, is in his second semester of the M.F.A. program at UM. He is surviving entirely on loans this year but is hoping for a fully-funded editorial position with the literary magazine "Cutbank" in the future.

After a collection of poems were read by Georgia Dennison, an honorable mention for the Merriam award, Maxwell prefaced his own reading with an explicit content warning.

"Am I going to offend people with this?" he mentioned he often thinks while writing. "Fuck that."

What followed was a series of four pieces that tended toward darker themes, drawn from Maxwell's past as a musician.

Because of his past, Maxwell truly embodies the non-traditional student, providing him with a remarkable amount of content to draw on for his writing. After growing up in suburban Austin, Maxwell spent most of his 20s in rock bands, playing bar gigs and not taking anything seriously.

"Those years were a blast," he said. "I was a total asshole ... It's where I really learned to ruin my life."

His itinerant years as a part-time musician and owner of a painting and maintenance business came to a head with a driving while intoxicated charge in 2007 that cost him a week in jail. Shortly after that, at the age of 49, Maxwell was evicted and started staying off and on at a shelter, Austin Research Center for the Homeless (ARCH).

"I think the culture shock of that was just as strong to me as if you plucked any normal kid from campus and dropped that into my situation," Maxwell said. He then successfully attended rehab for drug and alcohol addiction and talked his way into temporary housing.

The treatment stuck.

"Thank goodness I didn't join the Alcoholics Anonymous cult," he said. "I just rely on coffee and cigarettes these days."

After rehab, he started on the real literary path. He took an online GED course and ended up valedictorian of the course, earning him a scholarship at the local community college. Initially, he planned to learn web design.

"I decided I'd really rather write, and I might not have another



Barry Maxwell jokes with the audience between short stories in the Theta Rho room located in the Mansfield Library on March 2. Listeners included the judges for the Merriam-Frontier Award, which Maxwell received, as well as friends and family. PHOTO SARA DIGGINS

er chance — I might get hit by a bus tomorrow," Maxwell said. "It turned out to be a pretty good call."

The Austin Community College has a robust creative writing department, which allowed Maxwell to study fiction and nonfiction. After receiving his associates degree, he did the next logical thing and earned a full ride to the University of Texas.

During an interview for his scholarship, Maxwell was asked how he was going to give back to the world. His answer came quickly.

"I had thought about some kind of writing group or reading group at the homeless shelter before," he said. "I was getting all weepy at the interview because this was what I really wanted to do."

That's how Maxwell found himself back at the ARCH every week, running a program he called Street Lit. It started as a book drive, but expanded to include creative writing workshops. He ran the program for several years, helping both current and former homeless people find a way to express their thoughts and feelings

— and at the very least keep them occupied and out of trouble for a short period of time. Maxwell hopes to start a similar program at the Poverello Center in Missoula.

A lot of Maxwell's writing, as shown in his reading, is dark because he finds it natural to draw from his experiences.

"When I've written about life at the homeless shelter, of the mental vibe of the whole thing, people are fascinated by it. It shows them a world they've never seen before," he said. "Any novel or work of fiction can take you to frickin' Mars or the other side of the world. This is a different world that's just down the street. I think that's valuable."

Maxwell doesn't spend too much time thinking far into the future, which might include a Ph.D or a social work degree. For now, the focus is on connecting people through writing.

"It doesn't matter if someone's standing on the corner flying a sign or sitting in their huge house feeling lonely, there's shared humanity there," Maxwell said. "Plus, it's getting this stuff off my damn chest."

THEATER

Check your judgment at the door with 'In the Snow'

NOELLE HUSER

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A nightmare wolf, a failed resurrection, a death ballet, a cross dialogue and double negative psychosis all texture two dim interrogation rooms like a Pollock painting. Nothing on stage makes sense, but follows a dreamy logic at the same time.

“What the fuck is going on?” With a play like this, you ask that a lot,” Between The Lines Theatre founder, Mason Wagner, said of the company’s latest show, “In the Snow.”

It all began with a single mother who visited a Missoula health and human services nonprofit to apply for welfare. She struggled with her speech and handwriting, and the case worker involved questioned her ability to raise her own child, wondering if they should call child protective services.

Playwright Kate Morris was working the front desk that day and witnessed it all. Shaken with concern for the child, she stayed up that night questioning her own privilege that allowed her to pass judgment on the mother. She then decided to write a play where social workers could be seen as “real people” in a difficult position in society. “In the Snow” questions our judgments and perceptions about poverty and social assistance by forcing the audience to make complex decisions.

The psychological whodunit, directed by Kendra Potter, is an investigation into the murder of an impoverished and brain-damaged single mother and the disappearance of her injured son, and

the experience of two social workers in a rural northern town. As the psyche of the characters unravel, the script opens up and inviting the audience in with a rhetorical question that allows for a brief dialogue about social welfare.

“For me, any work of art that I want to make is strengthened by someone else’s experience,” Morris said. “The more voices involved in telling that story, the more likely it is that an audience member who comes from a completely different place will understand.”

Morris’ poetic representation of psychology provides a juxtaposition of how the characters present themselves against what is actually going on in their heads, pulling out their conscience and making it move in front of the audience. Overlapping dialogue forces them to choose what they see and hear.

The script is like nothing he’s ever seen, Wagner said.

“It’s like a musical score,” he said.

Actor Hailey Faust, who plays social worker Elizabeth, said the story’s freeform presentation mimics the nonlinear subject matter.

“It makes it a little bit more ethereal and allows us to live in those gray areas a little bit more,” she said.

Wagner said Morris’ “bold form of storytelling has provided and sustained the process,” questioning the judgements we project on others and how those judgments prevent us from empathizing. He said this pertains to the burnout culture of the nonprofit sector in Missoula, where social workers are often stretched too thin.



Timothy Petite (left) and Hailey Faust (right) practice a scene from the upcoming play, “In the Snow,” directed by Kendra Potter at the Zootown Arts Community Center on Feb. 27. The play’s first preview is on March 7, followed by the world premiere on March 8. PHOTO BY LIAM KESHISHIAN

“There are no easy answers to any of these questions, and this team is totally up to that,” he said.

Morris wants the audience to explore its role in the issues her play presents — poverty, inequality and welfare.

“I am hoping this play, with the way it has been constructed and the themes that it talks about, actually asks the audience to ask why,” she said.

A preview of the performance will be shown at 7:30 p.m. March 7 at the Roxy Theater, followed the next day by the premiere. For more information visit theroxytheater.org.

MOVIEGOING

Fine dining in the dark at new Southgate 9 movie theater

KAILYN MERCER

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Are you the kind of moviegoer who likes to kick back and put your feet up? Do you prefer a chicken Caesar salad over fresh, buttery popcorn? Have you ever found yourself wishing you had a bourbon to swill while you watch the newest action flick? If so, then the new AMC Southgate 9 movie theater at the mall is for you.

Dine-in theaters have become a trend in recent years in an attempt to boost declining ticket sales and get butts in seats. With complaints of rising ticket and snack costs, these theaters cater to those with the means to buy a \$13 salad and a \$10 movie ticket, not to mention whatever you pay for drinks. A night at the movies is a luxury to most, and dine-in theaters ratchet up the swanky experience.

AMC acquired Carmike Cinema in 2016, becoming the largest

theater chain in the nation. After more than a year of construction, the company held a soft open of the new Southgate 9 over the last weekend of February, making it the company’s first dine-in theater in the Pacific Northwest and the 28th in the country.

I attended the soft open on Feb. 26. The first thing I noticed when I walked into the lobby was the fireplace to my left, directly facing the in-house bar, cheekily named MacGuffin’s. Regrettably, the booze vendor wasn’t ready for the public yet, but I didn’t have long to stew over that disappointment. I needed to get seated for “Pitch Perfect 3.”

Once I had picked my seat and entered my assigned theater, I was greeted with a pleasant sight: fully adjustable leather recliners. Finally, I wouldn’t have to be one of the jerks who puts their feet up on the back of the seats in front of them in the name of comfort.

Attached to the recliners are swiveling dinner trays complete with a menu and silverware wrapped in fancy cloth napkins. The

variety of food was eclectic and seemingly out of place. The chicken sandwich had goat cheese. The pepperoni pizza was “artisan.” I decided to stick with popcorn for budgetary reasons. I am a poor college student, after all.

The servers were stealthy enough that they didn’t interrupt the movie too much. I’m pretty sure my chubby ass hit the call button a couple times, because they kept showing up with confused looks on their faces after I informed them I was perfectly fine with my traditional film snack.

Despite the bougie food I didn’t eat, I enjoyed watching the third “Pitch Perfect” from a comfy chair that wasn’t my own, which is a nice change of pace from holing up at home and scrolling through Netflix.

But you can bet I’ll enjoy it even more when I can slug down a whiskey sour while watching the next thrilling installment of a franchise about a bunch of wild acapella singers.

BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

Previewing Reno: The best in the Big Sky

LUCAS AILPORT

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In the Big Sky tournament in Reno, Nevada, this week, 24 teams will play 22 games to decide which teams will represent the conference in the NCAA tournament. Here are some players to watch on the men's side. Read more about Montana's players in this week's cover story.

JERRICK HARDING, WEBER STATE
 6-FOOT-1 SOPHOMORE GUARD

Harding, a unanimous All-Big Sky first-teamer, leads the Big Sky conference with 21.1 points per game. During the final game of the regular season on March 3, he scored 46 points against Montana State.

Weber State knows how to put the ball in the hoop. The Wildcats lead the Big Sky conference in field goal percentage, averaging 49.7 percent, and are third in scoring with 78.8 points per game.

When Weber State lost to Montana on March 1, Harding scored 19 points, but the team shot only 41 percent from the field. If Harding gets going and the Wildcats are making shots, the team can be lethal.

BOGDAN BLIZNYUK, EASTERN WASHINGTON
 6-FOOT-6 SENIOR FORWARD

Bliznyuk has been a solid presence the past four years for the Eagles and was rewarded this year with the title of Big Sky MVP. He recently became the first male player to join Eastern's 2,000 point club, and currently has 2,045 points, the third highest point-scorer in Big Sky history.

Bliznyuk can do it all. He averages 20 points, seven rebounds and four assists per game. He ranks second for assists and third for scoring. He also ranks sixth in rebounding. In the final game of the regular season, he broke an NCAA record by making his 74th consecutive free throw.

Eastern beat Montana three weeks ago and Bliznyuk finished with 19 points, six rebounds and five assists. The team has beaten some quality opponents, knocking off Stanford earlier in the year and losing a close game against Washington.

TYLER HALL, MONTANA STATE
 6-FOOT-5 JUNIOR GUARD

Hall, who was once compared to Portland Trail Blazers guard C.J. McCollum, can shoot the ball 20 times on any given night. But he has been inconsistent lately. Despite that, Hall is still one of the best scorers in the Big Sky.

If teams can lock down Hall and keep the ball out of his



Montana State guard Tyler Hall shouts to the bench during a game against the Griz in Dahlberg Arena on Feb. 20, 2016. PHOTO LACEY YOUNG

hands, then the Bobcats will have a hard time getting out of the first round in Reno. If he happens to find the scoring groove he is capable of, Montana State will be a big threat. The Bobcats could play Montana if they can get past North Dakota in the first round.

The Bobcats were ousted from last year's tournament against Southern Utah in triple overtime, 109-105. Hall scored 33 points in that game.

HOLLAND WOODS, PORTLAND STATE
 6-FOOT FRESHMAN GUARD

The Freshman of the Year has showed that he can be a big name in the Big Sky for the next three years at Portland State. Woods is known for his passing skills as he sits at the top of the assist column in the Big Sky with 5.8 assists per game, 28th nationally. The next closest conference player on that list is Bliznyuk with 3.9 APG.

Woods is an all-around guard who also shoots the ball well.

In 31.9 minutes per game he averages 10.5 points, which is just outside the top 30 in the Big Sky. The Vikings know how to score points, leading the Big Sky in scoring with 86.4, which puts them third nationally, behind Villanova (87.2 ppg) and Savannah State (87.0 ppg).

When Portland State played Montana the first time in Portland, Woods scored 16 points and dished out five assists. He had a harder time, however, when the Vikings came to Missoula. He only scored two points and tallied two assists in his 24 minutes.

BRAYON BLAKE, IDAHO
 6-FOOT-7 SENIOR FORWARD

Blake, an All-Big Sky first-teamer, can be hard to stop once he gets momentum. He averages a near double-double. In the Big Sky, he's ninth for points per game with 16.4, while leading the conference in rebounding with 9.5 per game.

The Vandals have the second seed heading into Reno. It wouldn't be a big surprise if the Vandals and the Griz faced off in the championship game. It would be a rematch from their last meeting in February when Idaho knocked off Montana in overtime, 79-77. Blake had himself a night, recording 27 points and 11 rebounds.

Idaho is ranked first for scoring defense, holding teams to only 67.8 ppg. Montana is right behind with 68.1 ppg.

BIG SKY CONFERENCE SCORING LEADERS

1. Jerick Harding / Weber State / 22.1
2. Andre Spight / Northern Colorado / 22.1
3. Bogdan Bliznyuk / Eastern Washington / 20.4
4. Victor Sanders / Idaho / 19.0
5. Justin Strings / Sacramento State / 18.3

MEN'S BASKETBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

1. Montana / 16-2
2. Idaho / 14-4
3. Weber State / 13-5
4. Eastern Washington / 13-5
5. Northern Colorado / 11-7
6. Portland State / 9-9
7. Idaho State / 9-9
8. Montana State / 6-12
9. North Dakota / 6-12
10. Southern Utah / 5-13
11. Sacramento State / 4-14
12. Northern Arizona / 2-16

BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

Previewing Reno: Five women's players to watch

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MIKAYLA FERENZ, IDAHO
5-FOOT-10 JUNIOR GUARD

The leading scorer in the conference (and top-10 nationally) at 22.8 points per game, Ferenz and the second-ranked Vandals are perhaps the most entertaining team in the conference. Head coach Jon Newlee employs an offense resembling the Golden State Warriors, looking to get a three-point shot nearly every time down the floor.

Idaho was the only team in the conference to make over 300 three-pointers (Montana, for comparison, was last in the conference with 129). Ferenz and teammate Taylor Pierce share the conference lead in threes made, for men or women, each finishing the regular season with 114.

She is also fifth in the Big Sky with 4.3 assists per game and cracks the top 15 in rebounding. If Idaho's offense is on and Ferenz is knocking down threes, the team will be a handful in Reno.

LEXI KLABO, NORTH DAKOTA
6-FOOT-2 JUNIOR FORWARD

Perhaps the premier post player in the conference, Klabo leads the Big Sky in rebounding with nearly 10 per game and is a top-five scorer at 18.8 points per game. The 6-foot-2 junior also has an impressive touch, tying for the conference lead by shooting 52 percent from the floor and 80 percent from the free throw line.

She is also the only player in the top 20 of scoring that has taken single-digit three-point attempts this year. But it isn't just on the offensive end that Klabo thrives. She is second in the conference in blocks with over two per game on a top-half defensive team.

North Dakota finished ninth in the conference standings with just five wins, but if Klabo gets hot they could make a deep run. They beat top-ranked Northern Colorado earlier this season in a game Klabo finished with 16 points and 17 rebounds.

MCKENZIE JOHNSTON, MONTANA
5-FOOT-7 SOPHOMORE GUARD

Johnston, standing just 5-7, is tied for the shortest player on this list, but plays much bigger than her stature. The guard is a do-it-all player for Montana, leading the Lady Griz in scoring (11.6 ppg), assists (5.0 per game) and steals, and is second on the team in rebounding (Jace Henderson, the team's leading rebounder, will likely miss the tourney



Lady Griz guard McKenzie Johnston is guarded by the University of Idaho's Mikayla Ferenz in Dahlberg Arena on Feb. 17. PHOTO LACEY YOUNG

with a sprained ankle).

She is tied for the lead in the conference in assists per game and enters the tournament scoring double-figures in six straight games. She has been forced to step up since Sophia Stiles went down with a torn ACL.

The Lady Griz have relied heavily on their floor general, who has played nearly 36 minutes per game, and will continue to do so into the conference tournament. Montana ended the season by losing six of its last seven games, meaning Johnston and company have their work cut out for them if the Lady Griz want to make it to the weekend.

SAVANNAH SMITH, NORTHERN COLORADO
5-FOOT-7 SENIOR GUARD

The best player on the regular season champion team, Smith is the fifth best scorer in the conference at nearly 18 points per game. A very tough and aggressive player, Smith gets it done on the defensive end with two steals per game.

Northern Colorado enters the tournament as the No. 1 seed after a 15-3 regular season behind the second-best defense in the Big Sky. The team's only losses on the year, other than a shocker against North Dakota in which Lexi

Klabo went off, came against the second and third ranked teams.

The energy of the conference tournament will put Smith on another level, making the Bears tough to beat.

DELANEY HODGINS, EASTERN WASHINGTON
6-FOOT SENIOR FORWARD

The name Hodgins should give any Big Sky coach nightmares. Delaney's older sister, Hayley, graduated as Eastern's all-time leading scorer with over 1,800 career points. Little sister one-upped her this season by becoming the first Eastern Washington player to eclipse the 2,000-point mark.

She is second in the league in scoring at 22.7 points per game, but that mark also puts her in the top 10 of the entire country. She shoots nearly 50 percent from the floor and 40 percent from the three-point line, both marks putting her near the top of the conference.

Hodgins is also one of the best defensive players in the Big Sky. She is the only player to rank in the top five in steals and blocked shots with 2.3 and 1.5 per game, respectively. The best player in the conference has the talent to lead the fourth-ranked Eagles into the national tournament.

BIG SKY CONFERENCE SCORING LEADERS

1. Mikayla Ferenz / Idaho / 22.7
2. Delaney Hodgins / Eastern Washington / 22.6
3. Laryn Brooks / Weber State / 20.1
4. Lexi Klabo / North Dakota / 18.8
5. Savannah Smith / Northern Colorado / 17.7

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

1. Northern Colorado / 15-3
2. Idaho / 13-5
3. Weber State / 12-6
4. Eastern Washington / 12-6
5. Idaho State / 11-7
6. Portland State / 11-7
7. Montana State / 9-9
8. Montana / 9-9
9. North Dakota / 5-13
10. Sacramento State / 5-13
11. Northern Arizona / 4-14
12. Southern Utah / 2-16

NOTHING ELSE COMPARES



	THE COMPETITION	
Individual Bathrooms with Enlarged Vanity and Shower Space	X	✓
Well-Designed Living Room and Bedroom Furnishings, Including Pillow-Top Mattresses	X	✓
Top-of-the-Line Appliances, Including In-Unit Washer/Dryer, Dishwasher, and Microwave	X	✓
47" TV Included in Each Living Room	X	✓
Extended Cable in Every Room (Includes Full Line of HBO Channels and The Root Network)	X	✓
Community-Wide Wi-Fi with Individual Ethernet Ports in Every Room	X	✓
Fully Equipped 24-Hour On-Site Fitness Center	X	✓
Complimentary Coffee in Our Café	X	✓
Complimentary Printing in Our Cyber Lounge	X	✓
Fire Pits, Grills, Lounging Space, and Enlarged Outdoor Games in Our Exclusive Courtyard	X	✓
Pet Friendly, Including Dogs	X	✓
Tech-Driven Safety Features for Your Peace of Mind	X	✓
Our Exclusive Students First® Program	X	✓
Quick Access to the University of Montana and Downtown Missoula	X	✓
The Clark Fork River and Kiwanis Park in Your Immediate Backyard for Outdoor Fun	X	✓
No Commitments to Unwanted Food Plans	X	✓